

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE
AND THE PETER AND JUDY JACKSON MUSIC PROGRAM PRESENT

UNIVERSITY AND SALISBURY CHORALES

A Celebration of
GOSPEL MUSIC
and Spirituals



William M. Folger, Conductor
Susan Zimmer, Pianist

Calesta Day, Soprano
Dr. John Wesley Wright, Tenor

Saturday, May 6, 2023
7:30 p.m.
Holloway Hall Auditorium

Salisbury
UNIVERSITY
Make Tomorrow Yours

PROGRAM

A CELEBRATION OF GOSPEL MUSIC AND SPIRITUALS

Mass: A Celebration of Love and Joy André J. Thomas
(b. 1952)
Orchestration Robert Elhai

- I. Kyrie
- II. Gloria
- III. Credo
- IV. Sanctus
- V. Agnus Dei

Hear My Prayer Moses Hogan
(1957-2003)
Arr. Stan Spottswood

The Chariot Jubilee Robert Nathaniel Dett
(1882-1943)
Ed. Jason Max Ferdinand

I Hear America Singing André J. Thomas

Special thanks to sponsors Peter and Judy Jackson and Fulton School of Liberal Arts

SALISBURY CHORALE PERSONNEL

Soprano I

Therese Hamilton
Kathleen Shannon
Sophie Smith
Aurelié Van de Wiele

Soprano II

Deborah Blanchard*
Aubrie Crehan
Amy Hasson
Susan Holt

Kathy Slaughter
Chrissy Troup
Arlene White

*Alto I

Lilly Devereaux
Leslie Finlayson
Karen Gabriszeski
Maggi Gallaheer
Daryl Newhouse
Catherine Skeeter

Marie Thomson
Joana Weaver

Alto II

Louise Anderson
Becki Chalmers
Brooke Faulkner
Patricia Mannion
Shawn McEntee
Lacey Robinson

Cara Rozaieski
Veronica Tomanek

Tenor I

John Allen
Dakota Linton
Jeffery Miller

Tenor II

Christopher Griffin
Edgar Isaacs

Bass I

Nicholas Troup

Bass II

Richard Hunter
David Medland
Maarten Pereboom
Ben Reavis
Ross Silverwood
Mark Williams

UNIVERSITY CHORALE PERSONNEL

Soprano I

Sandra Baptiste
Cameron Brickner
Alexis Cabezas
Molly Fullerton
Sophia Merbaum
McKenna Smith

Soprano II

Trenelle Dashiell
Ashley Piper
Sophia Price
AJ Fontaine
Anne Hadley

Alto I

Grace McCreary Bagley
Noelle Rash
Adison Wright

Alto II

Rheya Ford

Tenor I

John Allen
Trystan Rioux

Bass I

Zaybian Brown
Chris Dashiell
Will Edmunds

Bill Landon

Alex Piel
Jacob Rudland
Riley Smith

Bass II

Andrew King
John Simpson
Maleek Spriggs

ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Sachiho Murasugi
Concertmaster
Jacob Colby
Gregory Langer
Bill Phillips
Amy Weckesser

Violin II

Diane Coffin
Frederick Geiersbach
Maria Rusu
Marie Severyn

Viola

Victor Shaochung Hsia*
Jack Moore
Diane Neutzling
Karen Treber

Cello

Jeffrey Schoyen*
Tony Gizzi
Patricia Rose

Bass

Kimberly Johnson*
Buck Burton
Phil Ravita

Flute

Sally Hendon*
Lisa Adams

Piccolo

Lisa Adams

Oboe

Heidi Schultz*
Julie Barton

English Horn

Julie Barton*

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

Michelle Webb*
Jonathan Adams
Caitlynn Hetland

Bassoon

Kari Shea*
Amy Sterling

Horn

Jill Mears*
Stephanie Cyran
Hannah Lewis
Alison VanVorst

Trumpet

Bradly Kraus*
Wendell Banyay
Bill Williams

Trombone

Lawrence Knier*
Will Kichty
Michael Devine

Tuba

Spencer Koppenol

Percussion

Eric Shuster*
Eric Gehl
Mike Hughes
Jane Mahoney

Piano

Susan Zimmer*

Assistant conductor

Louise Anderson

*Principal

BIOGRAPHIES



Calesta "Callie" Day is a Grammy-nominated, classically trained opera singer, Psalmist, arranger, vocal instructor and coach, whose anointed and spiritually rich performances in diverse genres have brought her ongoing international acclaim. Her adaptation and rendition of the late Moses Hogan's "Hear My Prayer" made her an internet phenomenon gleaming over 20 million views. Day has been hard at work crafting her own vocal flair as an anointed, multi-talented and gifted woman of God, whose spiritual perception has made her one of the most dynamic and compelling talents. Day was

a contestant on NBC's Season 14 of *America's Got Talent Judge Cuts*. Her album is currently available on all digital networks and has earned her the No. 9 and No. 24 spots on *Billboard* magazine's Gospel and Classical Music charts respectively. Originally from Atlanta, GA, Day holds degrees from the University of Dayton (M.A. in education – music concentration), Bowling Green State University (B.M. in voice performance) and Sinclair Community College (A.A. in voice performance). She is a longtime member of the internationally celebrated American Spiritual Ensemble (ASE) and has performed with opera companies and ASE throughout the United States, Europe and Central America. Most recently, Day returned to Paris to perform the role of Chanteuse Gospel in the original Paris Ballet production *PLAY*, performed at the Palais Garnier, a part written expressly for her unique vocal range and prowess. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Day released a single and new music video project titled "In Trouble" with an artistic team of Monica Hodnett and Theresa Metzger. Day has released a collaboration single with Rev. Joe Pace II titled "All Things Are Working" and is currently available on all digital networks. Day has also released a Christmas single titled "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" on February 10, 2023, and it is currently available on all digital networks. Day is currently working on new material for her second album.



Tenor **John Wesley Wright** holds degrees from Maryville College and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he earned the M.M. in voice and D.M.A. in performance studies. A native of Rome, GA, he works as professor of music at Salisbury University, coordinating the voice and opera workshop programs. An active clinician and leader of workshops on voice production, interpretation and African American song traditions, he also co-directed the musical theatre program at the Maryland Summer Center of the Arts (2007-2014) and the 2022 Musical

Theatre and Voice Summer Enrichment Academy at Salisbury University. Making his Lincoln Center debut in Handel's *Messiah* (2017), he has performed solo repertoire ranging from Bach to Broadway throughout the world, including as a member of the Amsterdam Baroque Choir and the internationally celebrated American Spiritual Ensemble. Acclaim has also come as gold medalist of the American Traditions Vocal Competition 2000, with other top prizes from the National Federation of Music Clubs, the Metropolitan Opera National Council and the International Schubert Competition. His doctoral dissertation (2014) studies musical borrowings underlying the role of the Celebrant in Bernstein's *Mass*. He received a citation in 2022 from the State Senate of Maryland lauding his work with the American Spiritual Ensemble, educating of students, and the scholarship and performance of African American spirituals, and he is the 2023 recipient of the University System of Maryland Board of Regents' Award for Excellence in Creative Activity.

PROGRAM NOTES

This evening's performance continues the fall 2022 theme of "Africa and the World," while at the same time culminating the inauguration festivities of our 10th President of Salisbury University, Dr. Carolyn Ringer Lepre. "A Celebration of Gospel Music and Spirituals" presents choral-orchestral works by African American and African Canadian composers performed by a diverse ensemble of singers, instrumentalists, and featured soloists Calesta "Callie" Day, soprano, and John Wesley Wright, tenor.

Our celebration opens with *Mass: A Celebration of Love and Joy* dedicated to the Tallahassee Community Chorus (TCC) for which composer André Thomas was artistic director for 31 years. In 2017, TCC received the American Prize for Community Choruses in the United States and was asked to perform two concerts at the American Choral Directors Association National Conference in Kansas City, MO, in 2019. I was privileged to attend one of the concerts.

The gospel-style Mass, which took four years to complete, incorporates syncopations, call and response, a groove beat, and popular music harmonies, including augmented seventh chords, ninth chords and diminished chords. The text of the five parts of the Ordinary of the Mass is interspersed with biblical phrases related to the specific movements. For example, the Sanctus begins with "Above him stood the seraphim" from Isaiah chapter 6 verses 2-7 sung by the soloist with the choral response "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." The *Agnus Dei*, or Lamb of God litany, is interspersed with biblical-related themes: "you died on Calvary just to set the captives free" sung by the soloist and followed by the choral Lamb of God refrain. A similar structure exists in the *Kyrie eleison*, or Lord have mercy litany, at the beginning of the Mass with the text "Sinner, please don't let this harvest pass," from the hymn-spiritual "I know that my Redeemer Lives" lined out by the soloist with choral responses. Other soloistic texts in the *Kyrie* comment on the theme of mercy. In the *Gloria* and *Credo* movements, the soloists line out the text of the Ordinary followed by choral responses. Each movement covers a wide range of emotions culminating with joyful and improvisatory cadences.

Moses Hogan's spiritual "Hear My Prayer" is dedicated to the memory of Jester Hairston (1901-2000), an African American songwriter, conductor, singer and actor. Calesta Day's solo with piano rendition of this Spiritual "has taken the internet by storm and has made Callie an internet phenomenon." "Here My Prayer" is a reverent prayer of hope. Stan Spottswood arranged this spiritual for soprano and tenor solos, SATB Chorus, and orchestra. I thank Ithaca College School of Music, Theatre and Dance, and Dr. Whitehead for providing the scores for this arrangement.

The Chariot Jubilee was premiered in 1921, but it sadly remains relatively obscure among the staples in the choral repertoire according to Jason Max Ferdinand, editor, who writes there are three reasons for the work's early success which I believe are pertinent today: 1. A perfect blend between the Spiritual sections of the text and folklore- and spiritual-based texts creating an uplifting narrative; 2. The tuneful melodic lines, harmonies and rhythms expected of a choral work; and 3. "Dett's ethnic background [that] heightened the appeal of this work. African Americans saw in Robert Nathaniel Dett, [an African Canadian] the epitome of excellence, both in his music and his literary contributions."

A Celebration of Gospel
Music and Spirituals
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Ferdinand calls this work a free fantasia setting of a timeless text. There is a message of hope and a desire for a better tomorrow. The Spiritual “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” is an example of a code song referring to the Underground Railroad. Swinging low indicated a call for the abolitionists to visit the southern United States, the location of slaves, and hope “Coming for to carry me home.” The Biblical reference is the River Jordan, which the Israelites crossed to the Promised Land. The Jordan River in the United States in this context is the Ohio River, which slaves crossed to freedom. The Spiritual melody is gradually introduced in the instrumental introduction first by the bassoon, then horn, cellos, and flute, before the tenor solo enters. Dett creatively varies the melody with rhythmic syncopation and classical and quasi gospel-style harmonies. Partner-song format combines two different texts in each of the women and men’s parts with cross rhythms between the parts. Throughout the work, Dett alternates the texture of unaccompanied choral sections with those accompanied by the orchestra. Sections of this work are reminiscent of the revival-style hymns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Thomas’ “I Hear America Singing” closes the program with a rousing tribute to unity with “America singing of its greatness, beauty.” The Spiritual text “Oh, Walk Together Children” highlights the unity theme and is another example of a code song. Because slaveowners did not allow dancing and playing drums at worship services, the slaves had to find secret meeting places or “camp meetings” so they could meet one another and share their joys, pains and hopes. The Promised Land may have a double meaning, that of freedom in the north or the heavenly Promised Land. Prepare yourselves for an inspiring program of joyful and exhilarating music.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Bobbi Biron Theatre Program
Presents *The Maids*
May 4-7* • 7:30 p.m. & 2 p.m.*
Fulton Hall, Black Box Theatre

Salisbury Pops
Tuesday, May 9 • 7:30 p.m.
Holloway Hall Auditorium

Dalton Bosserman Recital
Friday, May 12 • 7:30 p.m.
Holloway Hall, Great Hall

Salisbury Symphony Orchestra
Summer Passport Featuring
John Kurokawa
Saturday, May 13 • 7:30 p.m.
Holloway Hall Auditorium

PRESTO
Tuesday, May 16 • 5 p.m. & 7 p.m.
Holloway Hall, Great Hall

Salisbury Youth Orchestra
Thursday, May 18 • 7:30 p.m.
Holloway Hall Auditorium

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John Raley, *Co-Chair, Department of Music, Theatre and Dance*
Colleen Clark, *Co-Chair, Department of Music, Theatre and Dance*
Suzanna Mallow, *Production Director, Department of Music, Theatre and Dance*
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